

## **LESSON PLAN**

### **Extremism and Extremist Organizations**

**TASK:** Identify Extremism and Extremist Organizations

**CONDITION:** In a small group discussion environment

**STANDARD:**

1. Define the Army's Policy on extremism.
2. Explain the Restrictions on Participation in Extremist Organizations.
3. Describe the Definitions of Terms Related to Extremism.
4. Explain the Prohibitions with Regard to Extremism.
5. Explain the Training Responsibilities of the Commander with Regard to Extremist Organizations and Activities.

**TIME OF INSTRUCTION:** 1 Hour

**MEDIA:** Slides (Optional)

**LEAD IN:** The United States Army is comprised of soldiers from various cultures, ethnic groups, religions and races from around the world. These various groups contain ideologies that range from extremely tolerant to extremely intolerant. It is the policy of the Army that participation in extremist activities or organizations is inconsistent with the responsibilities of military service. By learning more about the ideologies, history and dynamics of extremist groups, you will have a better understanding of the influences that can affect your soldiers and how their beliefs or actions can affect those of their peers. Keep in mind that any issue within society will likely find its way into the Army at some point. Extremism is no exception.

**QUESTION.** Ask students if they have ever been approached, or do they know of anyone who has been approached to join an extremist group. If so, how did they handle the situation?

**1. Impact on the unit and the mission.** When individuals in the armed services are supportive of extremism there is an immediate impact on the unit. Even as the mission continues and work is accomplished, the overall command climate changes as it adjusts to the new element. The unit might divide into opposing factions. When this happens the unit is no longer efficient and the "team concept" of accomplishing the mission is gone. Time and effort are now required to deal with the extremist views in the unit. The following are examples of how the unit is affected:

a. Command climate suffers. If there is a lack of trust and cohesiveness among unit members, morale will suffer, along with unit readiness.

b. Polarization of groups is a logical by-product of extremism within a unit. Extremist are not likely to work closely with members of other groups.

c. Undermines confidence among or between unit members.

d. Productivity and mission accomplishment can be seriously affected. The unit may not work together in training or a mission environment.

e. Enormous amount of time may be spent to retrain, counsel, investigate, and take corrective action.

2. **POLICY.** It is the policy of the U.S. Army to provide equal opportunity and treatment for all soldiers without regard to race, color, religion, gender, or national origin. Based on this philosophy, participation in extremist organizations or activities is inconsistent with the responsibilities of military service. Military personnel must reject participation in extremist organizations and activities. Extremist organizations and activities are one that advocate racial, gender, or ethnic hatred or intolerance; advocate, create, or engage in illegal discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, or national origin; advocate the use of force or violence, or unlawful means to deprive individuals of their rights under the United States Constitution or the laws of the United States or any State; or advocate or seek to overthrow the Government of the United States, or any States by unlawful means.

3. **PROHIBITIONS.** Soldiers are prohibited from the following actions in support of extremist organizations or activities. Penalties for violations of these prohibition include the full range of statutory and regulatory sanctions, both criminal (UCMJ) and administrative.

(1) Participating in a public demonstration or rally;

(2) Attending a meeting or activity with knowledge that the meeting or activity involves an extremist cause when on duty, when in uniform, when in a foreign country (whether on or off duty or in uniform), when it constitutes a breach of law and order, when violence is likely to result, or when in violation of off-limits sanctions or a commander's order;

(3) Fund raising;

(4) Recruiting or training members (including encouraging other soldiers to join);

(5) Creating, organizing, or taking visible leadership role in such an organization or activity; or

(6) Distributing literature on or off a military installation with the primary purpose and content of which concerns advocacy or support of extremist causes, organizations, or activities and it appears the literature presents a clear danger to the loyalty, discipline, or morale of military personnel, or if the distribution would materially interfere with the accomplishment of a military mission.

**5. TERMS AND DEFINITIONS.** In addition to the definition already presented for extremism and extremist organizations and activities, there are other terms you should be familiar with in order to discuss this issue with your soldiers. They include:

**SLIDE #1 - Optional**

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Supremacist.</b></li><li>• <b>Extremist.</b></li><li>• <b>Extremist Organizations.</b></li><li>• <b>Ideology.</b></li></ul>

a. **Supremacist.** Any person(s) maintaining the ideology, quality, state of being, or position of being superior to all others in something.

b. **Extremist.** A person who advocates the use of force or violence; advocates supremacist causes based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or national origin; or otherwise engages to deprive individuals or groups or their civil rights.

c. **Extremist Organizations.** A group which advocates the use of force or violence in support of supremacist causes; based on ethnicity, religion, gender, or national origin; or otherwise engages in efforts to deprive individuals or groups of their civil rights.

d. **Ideology.** A systematic body of concepts especially about human life or culture; a way of thinking used by a group or individual to express their beliefs and social values.

**6. Recruitment and Affiliation.** Instead of standing in streets dressed in sheets and shouting hate messages; extremists are now sitting in bars and break areas, wearing street clothes. The standard hateful message has not been replaced; just packaged differently. Recognizable hate symbols and paraphernalia are

usually hidden until a recruit is hooked on the validity of the ideology. In some cases, individuals subscribe to the ideology and not necessarily to the group.

**7. EXTREMIST GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS.** The majority of extremist groups and organizations have one predominant theme of superiority of one race over the other. This theme can also be applied to ethnicity and religious groups. Some of these groups and organizations proclaim violence as a means to achieve their goals. Most of these groups develop ideologies in an attempt to justify, legitimize and rationalize one particular version of reality. While the following groups are not representative of all extremist groups, a large portion fall into one of the two following categories:

**SLIDE #2 - Optional**

**EXTREMIST GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

- **Identity.**
- **White Supremacy Ideology.**

a. **Identity (or Christian Identity).** Followers of this ideology tend to believe the Jews are the descendants of Satan, and white Anglo-Saxons are the true Israelites, "God's chosen people," the sons of Adam, and the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel. They also believe in an impending worldwide race war which only whites will survive in the protection and maintenance of God's nation. The identity movement views the Bible as the true 'word of God' which was written for specific people (the white race). The true literal children of the Bible are the tribes of Israel to whom God promised a new land, a promised land which identity groups or churches identify as the United States. These children of God are ordered to occupy their land, cleanse it of Satan's children and 'sin' which is the evil power of Satan, and rule in righteousness with God the head of the government. Groups falling into this category are:

- (1) Ku Klux Klan.
- (2) Neo-Nazi.
- (3) Aryan Nation.
- (4) Identity Movement Churches.
- (5) New Jerusalem Fellowship.
- (6) Church of Jesus Christ Christian.

(7) Church of the Creator.

b. **White Supremacy Ideology.** The Christian “Identity” explanation of the diverse races of mankind is grounded in Biblical interpretation. According to this ideology, the white race is directly descended from Adam. The Jews are held to be the sons of Cain who was the issue of Eve after her original sin. Thus, Cain was the son of Satan and all of his descendants are the “spawn of the devil.” Identity ideology which emphasizes theories of white superiority and the duty of whites to survive and defend the U.S. is tied white supremacy and to “racial purity,” the safeguarding of the existence and reproduction of the white race. Groups falling into this category include:

- (1) Separatists (Nationalist).
- (2) Third Position (Aryan Socialism).
- (3) Neo-Nazi Skinheads.
- (4) Fifth Era.

8. **TATTOOS.** Tattoos are frequently associated with racist and/or gang activities. Skinheads frequently use tattoos and symbols of lightning bolts, skulls, Nazi swastikas, eagles, and Nordic warriors. Skinhead graphics also feature barbed wire, hobnailed boots, and hammers in their symbolism. This information being provided is general in nature and is provided as a guide only. No immediate assumptions should be made when strange or suspicious tattoos are observed. However, they may be considered a warning signal something might be worth checking into further. When in doubt, consult the Staff Judge Advocate for clarification and guidance.

9. **Command Authority.** Commanders have the authority to prohibit military personnel from engaging in or participating in any other activities the commander determines will adversely affect good order and discipline or morale within the command. This includes, but is not limited to, the authority to order the removal of symbols, flags, posters, or other displays from barracks, to place areas or activities off-limits (see AR 190-24), or to order soldiers not to participate in those activities that are contrary to good order and discipline or morale of the unit or pose a threat to health, safety, and security or military installation.

10. **Command Options.** Commander’s option for dealing with a soldier’s violation of the prohibitions include:

**SLIDE # 3 - Optional**

### COMMAND OPTIONS

- UCMJ Actions.
- Involuntary Separation.
- Reclassification.
- Administrative Action.

a. UCMJ action. Possible violations include:

(1) Article 92 -- Riot or breach of peace.

(2) Article 117 -- Provoking speeches or gestures.

(3) Article 134 -- General article, specifically, conduct which is prejudicial to the good order and discipline or service discrediting.

b. Involuntary separation for unsatisfactory performance or misconduct, or for conduct deemed prejudicial to good order and discipline or morale.

c. Reclassification actions or bar to reenlistment actions, as appropriate.

d. Other administrative or disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the commander, based on the specific facts and circumstances of the particular case.

**11. Command Responsibilities.** Any soldier involved with or in an extremist organization or activity, such as membership, receipt of literature, or presence at an event, could threaten the good order and discipline of a unit. In any case of apparent soldier involvement with or in extremist organization or activities, whether or not violation of the prohibitions in subparagraph (2), commanders must take positive actions to educate soldiers, putting them on notice of potential adverse effects that participation in violation of the Army policy may have upon good order and discipline in the unit and upon their military service. These positive actions include:

a. Educating soldiers regarding the Army's equal opportunity policy. Commanders will advise soldiers that extremist organization's goals are inconsistent with the Army goals, beliefs, and values concerning equal opportunity.

b. Advising soldiers any participation in extremist organizations or activities:

(1) Will be taken into consideration when evaluating their overall duty performance to include appropriate remarks on evaluation reports.

(2) Will be taken into consideration when selections for positions of leadership and responsibility are made.

(3) Will result in removal of security clearances, where appropriate.

(4) Will result in reclassification actions or bar to reenlistment actions as appropriate.

## **12. Commander's Responsibilities:**

- a. Understand what their service members positions are.
- b. Be alert for indicators of extremist ties or behaviors.
- c. Enforce policies on active participation.
- d. Educate and counsel service members on understanding of policy.

e. The commander or a military installation or other military controlled facility under the jurisdiction of the United States shall prohibit any demonstration or activity on the installation or facility that could result in interference with or prevention of orderly accomplishment on the mission of the installation or facility, or present clear danger to loyalty, discipline, or morale of the troops. Furthermore, such commanders shall deny requests for the use of military controlled facilities by individuals or groups that engage in discriminatory practices involving such practices.

f. Commanders should seek the advice and counsel of their legal advisor when taking actions pursuant to this paragraph.

**13. TRAINING ON EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS.** Each member of your unit should receive training on extremist activities and organizations. By providing training to your soldiers, you not only educate them, but also put them on notice of the potential adverse effects that participation in these types of activities may have on their military careers. The training provided to soldiers should include not only the policy and prohibition of participating in extremist organizations or activities, but at a minimum the following:

- a. The Army's Equal Opportunity policy. Soldiers should be clearly instructed that extremist organizations' goals are inconsistent with the Army's goals, beliefs, and values with regard to equal opportunity.
- b. Participation in extremist organizations or activities may be taken into consideration when evaluating their overall duty performance, to include appropriate remarks on evaluation reports.
- c. When selections for positions of leadership and responsibility are made, their participation may be considered.
- d. Participation may lead to removal of security clearance.
- e. May result in reclassification actions or bar to reenlistment actions being initiated and finalized.
- f. UCMJ actions may be initiated.
- g. Involuntary separation for unsatisfactory performance or misconduct, or for conduct deemed prejudicial to good order and discipline or morale.
- h. Other administrative or disciplinary action deemed appropriate by the commander.

14. Conduct a check on learning and summarize the learning activity.

Q. What is expected of military members with regard to participation in extremist organizations or activities?

A. Military personnel must reject participation in extremist organizations and activities.

Q. What are some specific activities which are prohibited?

A. Participation in a public demonstration or rally. Attending meetings or activities with knowledge the activity involves an extremist cause when on duty, or in uniform; when in a foreign country (whether on or off duty or in uniform); when it constitutes a breach of law and order; when violence is likely to result; or, when in violation of an off-limits sanctions or a commander's order. Fund raising recruiting or training (including encouraging other soldiers to join), creating, organizing, or taking a visible leadership role in such an organization or activity; or, distributing literature on or off a military installation the primary purpose and content of which concerns advocacy or support of extremist causes, organizations, or activities and it appears that the literature presents a clear danger to the loyalty, discipline, or morale of military personnel, or if the



distribution would materially interfere with the accomplishment of a military mission.

Q. What is the one predominant theme found in most extremist organizations or activities?

A. Superiority of one race or ethnic group over another.

Q. How do you define the term "ideology?"

A. A systemic body of concepts especially about human life or culture; a way of thinking used by a group or individual to express their beliefs and social values.

***Closing:*** *Extremism in most any form can have a very serious, and negative impact on unit cohesion and effectiveness. We must always try to be aware of any type activity trying to surface in our work areas and living areas.*

As the leaders in the Army, you are in the best position to know what the soldiers are doing. You are also in the best position to influence your soldiers. You should be always on the alert for signs of extremist activities within your organization. Encourage your soldiers to report anyone approaching them on the subject of extremism. If you see evidence of this type of behavior or activities, immediately report your concerns to the chain of command. Our soldiers have every right to expect the Army to keep this type of activity out of their living and working areas. You have the responsibility to do your absolute best to ensure it does not surface in your units. Are there any questions?